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Security Council

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Letter dated 19 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 19 May 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to you (S/2000/457), in which he draws the Security Council's attention to the intention of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to conclude an agreement with the Red Crescent of Saudi Arabia on the construction of a cultural centre near an Orthodox cemetery in Pristina, Kosovo and Metohija. The letter refers to the Yugoslav Government's criticism of this agreement as running counter to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Desirous of respecting the Charter of the United Nations, taking fully into account the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States and remaining in full compliance with international conventions, the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia feels it must express its views on the agreement to be concluded between UNMIK and the Red Crescent of Saudi Arabia. The lot referred to in the above-mentioned letter was chosen by the municipality of Pristina and a representative of UNMIK for the construction of a cultural centre in the city. The site in question, which was ceded to the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, representing the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is more than 300 metres from the above-mentioned Orthodox cemetery, and trees are being planted along the wall of the cemetery to set it completely apart.

We believe that this issue has been raised in order to attempt to block the establishment of the cultural centre. That having been said, if the issue is seen from the standpoint of religion (proximity of the chosen site to a cemetery), it is worth noting that houses of worship such as mosques and churches are situated near each other in the city of Pristina.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Fawzi Bin Abdul Majeed **Shobokshi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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